

GENERAL NEWS

DISCOVERED:

PSH STUDENT SIGNED BY PROS

Don Walters
Capital Times

Flame throwin' Rob Mitchell, a 1987 Phoenixville graduate who is now entering his senior year at Penn State Harrisburg as an accounting major, was recently signed as a free agent by the Philadelphia Phillies.

The 20-year-old Mitchell, a 6-foot-4, 160-pound righthanded pitcher, will report to Clearwater, Fla., for spring training in March of 1991 after he attends classes at PSH this fall.

The Phantom's Program can't take credit for this young hurler's success.

Mitchell never played high school or American Legion baseball for Phoenixville. He was cut from the high school team as a junior because he had control problems and didn't go out as a senior. He never went out for the Legion team.

However, last year he transferred to Penn State Harrisburg and found the two most important things of his baseball career - PSH Head Coach Gary Pritchard

and the strike zone.

"Gary Pritchard taught me everything about being a pitcher," says Mitchell. "My biggest problem has always been throwing strikes - ever since I was in Little League."

"I never had a coach that took the time needed to help me learn how to pitch with control, but coach Pritchard took me from day one and worked with me."

"The thing he stressed the most was the mental part. He gave me the confidence I needed to become a good pitcher. I always could throw hard, but I had no confidence, and without confidence you can't throw strikes."

Mitchell emerged as an ace last spring for Penn State after gaining valuable experience during the season.

Last month Mitchell went to Chestnut Hill Academy for the Phillies' tryout camp where he made an immediate impression on the scouts.

"I just happened to go there on my own," states Mitchell. "There were about 40 pitchers there and I was the fifth one to throw."

"After my fifth pitch, the scout watching me told me to stop and called to Joe Reilly. Mr Reilly came across the field and told me to throw on the side."

"After just a couple of pitches he told me to stop and go home before another team spotted me."

Mitchell said his fastball was not clocked by a JUGS gun but estimates it's almost 90 mph. He said Reilly was more impressed with the movement of his pitches.

"They say I have a moving fastball," Mitchell said. "At least when I throw it right. It doesn't seem like the Phillies are too much into the gun. Their guys can tell if you throw fast enough. They want ball movement more than speed."

Mitchell said his biggest advantage may be his untapped potential.

"I've really only pitched one year of ball since Little League," he said. "I have a lot of talent, but I know I am very raw."

"I've come so far the past year, and I credit Coach Pritchard, but I also feel I have so much more to learn and so much more improving to do."

Phoenixville High School has produced more than its share of professional baseball players.

As reported by a Phoenixville paper, two Phoenixville High seniors - catcher Creighton Gubanich and center fielder Cesar Ramirez - were selected in the June amateur draft. Gubanich, picked in the sixth round, has agreed to sign a contract worth \$80,000 with the Oakland A's and Ramirez turned down an offer from the Cleveland Indians to accept a full scholarship from Seton Hall University.

Two years ago, Mike Piazza - who graduated from Phoenixville one year before Mitchell - was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers. Piazza currently is catching with the Dodgers' class A team in Vero Beach, Fla.

And of course, the most legendary Phoenixville baseball name is former major league star Andre Thornton.

But unlike Thornton, Piazza and Gubanich - all of whom were famous throughout their scholastic careers - Mitchell was a virtual unknown.

RENOVATIONS from 1

Other renovations, restorations and additions included:

MET LAB

PSH undertook a 3200 square foot addition to the Mechanical Engineering Technology Laboratory over the summer months.

The addition includes two 36-student classes and an automotive lab. An outside contractor worked with university staff on the project with intentions of improving the facility and enhancing the attractiveness of it.

The project cost \$330,000 and was funded by gifts to PSH -- with the lead

gift from the Whittaker Foundation.

The lab is ready for the fall semester!

DINING HALL

The final stage of a 4-year project in the dining hall took place over the summer.

This consisted of complete refurbishing and purchasing of new equipment for the kitchen.

LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER

Room W-112 was redone as a new learning assistance center.

The room contains a writing center and other learning support activities.

INTERACTIVE CLASSROOM

A new addition to Olmsted is the "interactive classroom" on the third

floor.

This room contains the technology for the usual telephone traffic, plus data transmission to and from University Park and two-way audio/visual communication.

This room will be used as a regular classroom during the fall semester and will become an "interactive classroom" in the spring semester.

APARTMENT BUILDING

PSH is now in the process of completing the 1st year of a 3-year conversion project in the apartment building on campus.

When completely renovated, the building will contain: continuing education offices, apartments for guest speakers to stay in while on campus, child care facilities, etc.

What else happened while you were on summer vacation?

1) replacement roofs on dorms and apartments

2) new air conditioning in Continuing Education building

3) reupholstered chairs and new carpet in the Lion's Den

4) writing lab became a classroom

5) art studio renovations

6) new insulation in Meade Heights

7) resurfaced parking lot next to MET

lab

8) installation of catch basin in front of Olmsted at west end

9) raising of water control device in front of dorms so guard rails can be eliminated -- will be complete in 1-2 years

10) carpeting in the new lobby

AIM
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